

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

1. AUSTRIA: OPEC HOSTAGES EN ROUTE TO AIRPORT

AT 7 A.M. LOCAL TIME (1 A.M. EST) FIVE TERRORISTS BOARDED A BUS TO THE AIRPORT WITH ELEVEN OIL MINISTERS SEIZED IN YESTERDAY'S ASSAULT ON OPEC HEADQUARTERS IN VIENNA. A PLANE IS WAITING TO FLY THEM TO AN UNDISCLOSED DESTINATION -- PROBABLY ALGERIA -- WHERE THEY HAVE PROMISED TO RELEASE THEIR HOSTAGES.

ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS, THE TERRORISTS KILLED THREE AND INJURED EIGHT DURING THE ATTACK. THEIR HOSTAGES INCLUDE SHEIKH ZAKI YAMANI OF SAUDI ARABIA, JAMSHID AMUZEGAR OF IRAN, AND THE OIL MINISTERS OF ALGERIA, ECUADOR, GABON, INDONESIA, IRAQ, LIBYA, NIGERIA AND VENEZUELA. IN RELATED
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EVENTS:

--A GROUP CALLING ITSELF THE "ARM OF THE ARAB REVOLUTION" CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RAID.

--BOTH THE PALESTINE LIBERATION POPULAR FRONT AND THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION DENIED CONNECTION WITH THE ASSAULT. (CONFIDENTIAL) VIENNA 10583 AND 10581, 12/21.)

2. ARGENTINE REBELS FREE CAPTIVES, VOW DEFIANCE

LATE LAST EVENING REBELLIOUS ARGENTINE AIRMEN DETERMINED TO UNSEAT PRESIDENT PERON FREED FIVE OFFICERS THEY HELD CAPTIVE, ACCORDING TO NEWS TICKER REPORTS. THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES MAY SIGNAL THAT THE MUTINEERS ARE ABOUT TO END THEIR FOUR-DAY REVOLT, BUT AT MIDNIGHT IN BUENOS AIRES (10 P.M. EST) THE REBELS ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE VOWING THEY HAD NOT SURRENDERED EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE THREATENED WITH A "FINAL REPRESSIVE ATTACK." ALSO AT MIDNIGHT THE GENERAL LABOR CONFEDERATION ORDERED A WORK STOPPAGE TO BEGIN AT 10 A.M. (8 A.M. EST), DECEMBER 22.

DURING THE DAY THE REBEL AIRMEN:

--HAD REJECTED A PROMISE BY AIR FORCE CHIEF AGOSTI THAT HE WOULD JOIN OTHER MILITARY COMMANDERS IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE "A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN THE GOVERNMENT;" AND

--CONTINUED TO INSIST THAT LOYALIST TROOPS JOIN THEM IN AN OPEN CALL FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRESIDENT.

IN OTHER DEVELOPMENTS DECEMBER 21:

--LOYALIST AIR FORCE OFFICERS REFUSED TO JOIN IN A PLANNED ASSAULT ON THE REBEL BASE.

--MRS. PERON'S BACKERS IN THE CONGRESS VOICED SUPPORT FOR HER PUBLICLY, BUT MANY ADMITTED IN PRIVATE THAT SHE HAD TO GO. (CONFIDENTIAL) BUENOS AIRES 8295,
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12/21.)

3. SAUDI ARABIA: SAUDI MILITARY PACKAGE FOR YEMEN BACK ON TRACK

SAUDI MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN TOLD ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON DECEMBER 20 THAT THE SAG HAS AGREED TO A MILITARY ASSISTANCE PACKAGE FOR YEMEN WORTH BETWEEN 40 AND

60 MILLION DOLLARS. THE DEAL WHICH WAS ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED BY THE US:

--WAS CONCLUDED DURING YARG PRESIDENT HAMD'I'S RECENT "FRUITFUL" VISIT TO RIYADH; AND

--WILL BE ADMINISTERED BY A JOINT COMMISSION OF SENIOR SAUDI AND YEMENI OFFICIALS WHO WILL COORDINATE MILITARY PLANNING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

SULTAN ADDED:

--THE PACKAGE IS A GOOD FIRST STEP BUT MUST BE FOLLOWED UP WITH SOMETHING MORE EXTENSIVE.

--IF THE US CANNOT FULFILL YEMEN'S FUTURE ARMS NEEDS, THE SAUDIS WILL SHOP FOR THEM IN BRITAIN AND FRANCE.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON COMMENTS THAT FOR NOW SAUDI PARTICIPATION IN YEMEN'S MILITARY MODERNIZATION PROGRAM SEEMS TO BE BACK ON THE TRACKS, ALTHOUGH FURTHER PRODDING FROM US WILL PROBABLY BE NECESSARY. (SECRET) JIDDA 8369 (EXDIS), 12/21.)

4. SOVIET VIEWS ON BANGLADESH: SELECTIVE NON-INTERVENTION

SOVIET DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FIRYUBIN HAS GIVEN AMBASSADOR STOESEL THE IMPRESSION THAT MOSCOW IS OBSESSED WITH THE IDEA THAT THE PRC IS BEHIND VARIOUS ANTI-SOVIET DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH. FIRYUBIN TERMED THE SITUATION "MURKY" AND SEEMED UNSURE OF THE NEW REGIME'S ABILITY TO DEAL WITH ITS PROBLEMS.

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AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: JUDGING FROM FIRYUBIN'S STATEMENTS:

--ABOVE ALL, THE SOVIETS WANT STABILITY IN THE REGION -- THEY SEEM LESS CONCERNED ABOUT PREVENTING INDIAN INTERVENTION IN BANGLADESH THAN THAT IT SHOULD BE QUICK AND DECISIVE IF UNDERTAKEN.

--PREVENTION OF A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN PRC INFLUENCE IS MORE IMPORTANT TO MOSCOW THAN BANGLADESH CONCERNS. (SECRET) MOSCOW 18221 (EXDIS), 12/20.)

5. BOLIVIA REACHES AGREEMENT WITH CHILE ON SEA OUTLET

BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT BANZER ANNOUNCED LAST NIGHT THAT BOLIVIA

AND CHILE HAVE REACHED AN AGREEMENT ON A BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO THE SEA. NEGOTIATIONS ON THE DETAILS ARE TO BEGIN IMMEDIATELY, HE SAID. EMBASSY LA PAZ COMMENTS THAT THE BREAK IN

THE 97 YEAR OLD IMPASSE WILL BE VIEWED AS A POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC TRIUMPH FOR BOLIVIA AND IS LIKELY TO MAKE BANZER A NATIONAL HERO. (UNCLASSIFIED) LA PAZ 8946, 12/21.) KISSINGER

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